completion during 2005-06 and the remaining section will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Effect on rail network due to climatic change

1943. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether climatic changes over the next 30 to 50 years would affect the rail network in the country;

(b) whether sea between Kochi and Mumbai is rising thus increasing the repair and maintenance cost of the rail project;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) Governments' plans to rectify the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Normally climatic changes over the subcontiment in time scale of 30 to 50 years are not likely to effect the rail network to any significant level. There have been no variations observed in repair and maintenance costs of rail projects which can be related to any change in sea level on western coast. Some recently reported studies have predicted that temperatures could rise by 3 to 4° Celsius, sea level could rise in southern penisular India and monsoon rains could witness 10 to 30% increase by end of 21st century. However these studies are indicative only at this stage. Construction and Maintenance practices will adapt to the situations arising over the time.

Japanese loan for dedicated freight corridor project

1944. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japanese offer of a cheap loan to Railways much hyped dedicated freight corridor project has not been seriously considered by Railways;

(b) whether loan was offered at an interest rate of 0.45 per cent but with a condition that Railways would source 30 per cent of equipment required from Japan;

(c) if so, what were main reasons Railways have decided to explore other international funding agencies as well;

(d) whether any concrete efforts from other international sources have also been considered; and

(e) if so, by what time final decision in this project is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. It has been agreed between the Govt. of India and Japan in the Joint Statement of the two Prime Ministers signed on 29.04.2005 that the feasibility of a dedicated high axle load freight corridor project for Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah sectors of Indian Railways utilizing the Japanese STEP (Special Terms of Economic Partnership) YEN loan shall be examined. A proposal for carrying out a development study for the dedicated freight corridor project has since been posed to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on 07.07.2005.

(b) There is no offer of Loan so far. However, normally under the STEP Yen loan scheme, 30% of the loan would be tied to procurement from Japan. The loan covers up to 85% of the total project cost with an interest rate of 0.4% and repayment period of 40 years including 10 years grace period.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise. Feasibility study of the Project is in hand at present.

Passenger Reservation Systems

1945. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the East Coast Railway (ECoR) proposes to open more Passenger Reservation Systems (PRS) to help the commuters of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the existing number of reservation facilities, so far, commissioned by the ECoR; and